

Athletic Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday, June 8, 2017
7:00pm
Phillips Building, 30 Common Street
Watertown, MA
Room 101

Attendees: Kendra Foley; Chair, Candace Miller; Member, Guido Guidotti; Member, Mark Sideris, Dr. Theresa McGuinness, Mike Lahiff, coaches and members of the public

- I. Call to Order
- II. Discussion and vote on Recommendation to Town Council Regarding Athletic Field Needs
 1. Discussion centered on the needs of our student athletes. Currently, four teams (football, boys soccer, girls soccer and field hockey) in the fall and three teams (girls lacrosse, boys lacrosse and baseball) in the spring share one lighted turf. Issues of concern are as follows.
 - a. Schedule
 - i. Because of the lack of turf/lighting for athletic use, teams are forced to share the turf at Victory Field and therefore often need to practice late into the evening (9:00 pm and later) to accommodate all athletes. In the fall, there are three slots needed daily. In the spring, there are two slots needed daily. There is no room for JV programs on the turf. This past fall season, there were 31 nights when the time of a practice or game went until 9:00pm or later. During this most recent spring season, there were 17 nights when the time of a practice or game went until 9:00 pm or later.
 - b. Academic
 - i. Students are often not able to go to practice after school, return home for dinner then do homework, but instead often spend the dinner/evening hours practicing, which hampers the ideal academic schedule for our student athletes. There is also no consistency to their practice schedule, which is challenging as our student athletes balance their academic work with family time and their sport.
 - c. Safety
 - i. There are serious safety concerns when two teams are sharing the turf, such as lacrosse and baseball in the spring, for fear that a baseball will hit a lacrosse player.
 - d. Equity
 - i. There are equity issues that arise from the lack of turf for practices/games. Since football is not allowed to play on the grass, girls soccer is often forced to either practice on grass at Moxley or have a very late and erratic practice schedule on shared turf. Since they play most games on turf, this puts their program at a disadvantage and is unfair to these athletes.
 - e. School Start Time Change
 - i. We anticipate the district taking a serious look at changing the school start time for MS and HS to 8:30 am for the 2018/2019

academic year, which would further exacerbate the current late practice schedule.

f. Weather

i. Using this spring season as an example, the rain caused numerous field closures, making even grass practices impossible for student athletes. An additional turf would allow more flexibility when rain hampers the schedule.

2. 3-0 vote in support of the following statement: "Based on the needs we have heard from coaches about the current practice/game schedules of our student athletes, we request that the Town Council examine the feasibility of adding a turf field with lights in Watertown."

III. Adjournment at 8:30pm